

Fun in the Sun: Ways to Incorporate Sensory and Movement in Outdoor Environments

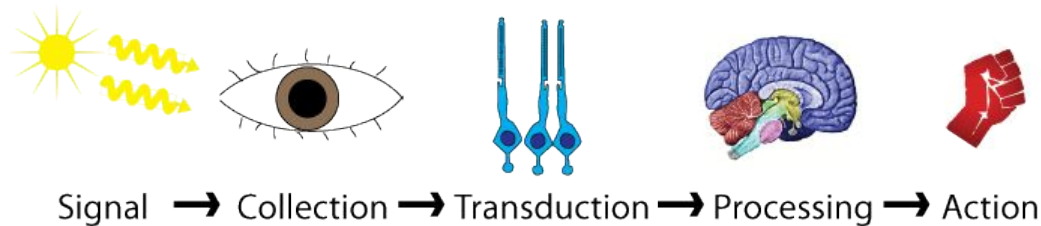
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Housekeeping

- For educational and quality control, we will be recording this zoom session.
- By participating, you are consenting to being recorded.
- Before this session is shared, we will edit to remove identifying information to protect your privacy.
- The Q&A section will be removed and only be shared as an anonymous transcript

What is sensory Processing

- How our nervous system receives messages from our senses and turns it into motor and behavioral responses.



What are our senses?



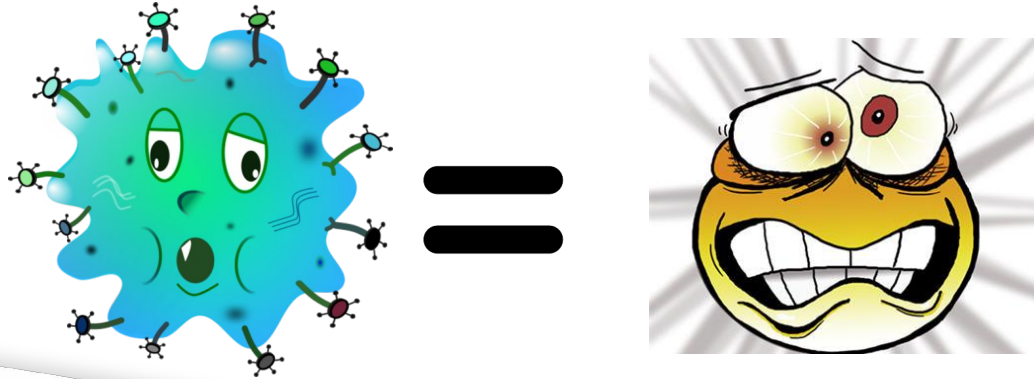
What do we know about sensory processing?

- Whatever you are doing, your successful completion of the activity requires processing sensations
- Everyone experiences sensations differently and we all have likes and dislikes--- *preferences*



What happens when there is a “flaw” in processing

- A neurological “traffic jam” that prevents certain parts of the brain from receiving the information needed to interpret sensory information correctly.
- This leads to challenges in performing everyday tasks and even high levels of stress



Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) represents a complex developmental disability that is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain.

Social communication

- Deficits in reciprocity
- Deficits in nonverbal communication
- Difficulty developing peer relationships

Sensory processing

- Hyper (low threshold)- or hypo (high threshold) reactivity to sensory stimulation



Sensory profile

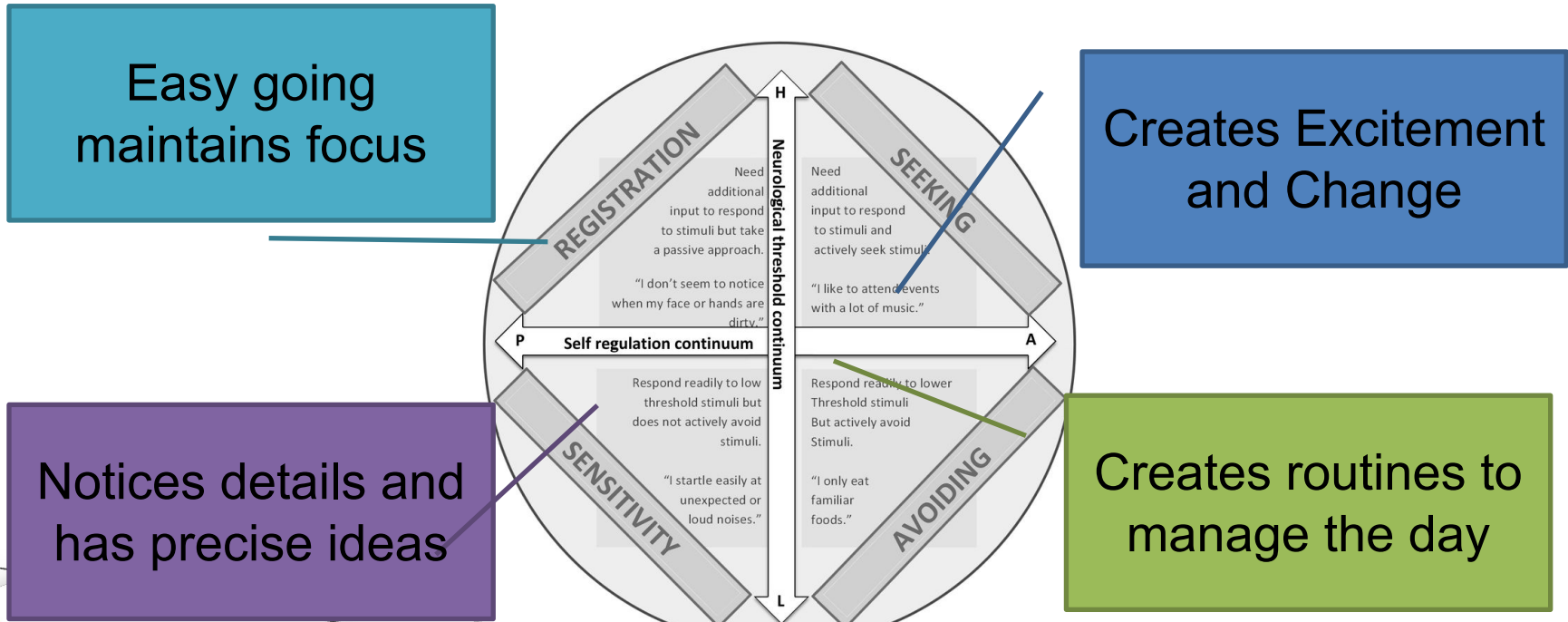
- Measures a person's response to sensory events in daily life





| Quadrants | <i>More than others scores in the quadrant (i.e., always—lower numerical scores)</i> | | <i>Less than others scores in the quadrant (i.e., never—higher numerical scores)</i> | |
|---------------------|--|---|--|---|
| | Key characteristic | Intervention focus (provide within participation) | Key characteristic | Intervention focus (provide within participation) |
| Low Registration | Notices less | Provide more intensity | Notices more | Provide more familiarity |
| Sensation Seeking | Seeks and enjoys input | Provide more opportunities | Does not seek input | Provide variety |
| Sensory Sensitivity | More detection | Provide more structured input | Less detection | Increase awareness |
| Sensation Avoiding | Bothered by input | Make less input available | Less likely to withdraw | Provide organized input |




Your reaction to different stimuli

- **Seeking** – the person actively seeks certain types of sensory input
- **Sensitive** – the person is sensitive to certain types of sensory input
- **Avoiding** – the person avoids certain types of sensory input because they are distressed by it or cannot process it
- **Low registering** – the person does not appear to register the same level of sensory input as others

What it might look like for you



| Sensory Input | Things that I do and that I like... | Things I find hard or do not like... | You can help me by... |
|--|---|--|--|
| Auditory (hearing)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to music Listening to people read to me Strange noises | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trying to concentrate when there is a lot of background noise going on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer me a quiet place to retreat to when I am struggling to focus on a task Supporting verbal information with writing, pictures, photos, gestures and facial expressions. |
| Visual (sight)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watching the laundry go round in the washing machine Watching people preparing food People watching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although I enjoy busy environments this can become too much for me after a while | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking me to a quieter area if it is too busy for me to concentrate Allowing me to watch my laundry or busy people, as I like this, but offer a quiet environment afterwards to give me a chance to process this information Giving me opportunities to view different kinds of scenery when out on the bus Organising off-peak times for outings |
| Olfactory (smell)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conventionally pleasant smells, I enjoy the smells of cooking and laundry (No major preferences noted) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conventionally unpleasant smells (No major aversions noted) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving me access to sensory activities (e.g. smelly products for the bath/shower, laundry powder when doing the washing). This will give me a richer sensory diet even though it is not a particular difficulty for me. |
| Oral (taste)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I prefer sweet foods like chocolate and biscuits I like a lot of sauce I can overeat at times until I am sick | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't like vegetables | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging me to explore different foods and choose the foods I like Encouraging me to eat crunchy or chewy snacks Offering me a sports bottle or straw to drink from Helping me to understand portion sizes |

| Sensory Input | Things that I do and that I like... | Things I find hard or do not like... | You can help me by... |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Tactile (touch)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal space • Short sleeves • Pulling my trousers up high • Adjusting my clothes regularly • Deep pressure massage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting my hands messy, I don't even like using liquid soap | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing me with enough personal space • If you need to touch me, let me know before you do this • Offering bar soap instead of liquid • Allowing me to wear gloves during messy activities if I choose • Letting me clean my hands and face when I need to • Using deep pressure touch rather than light pressure touch where needed • Trying an electric toothbrush |
| <p>Vestibular (balance)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jumping • Swings • Bouncing on the trampoline • Cycling • Horse riding • Sailing • Roller coasters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can sometimes find uneven surfaces, such as deep shingle at the beach, a bit difficult and may want to hold on to someone | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing me to jump and bounce • Providing opportunities to access vestibular activities as they help me to calm, such as going to playgrounds, riding bicycles, boat trips, horse riding • Facilitating regular bus rides |
| <p>Proprioception (body awareness)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bouncing on the trampoline • Deep pressure massage • Cycling • Ripping up clothing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If I don't have regular breaks I can get tired easily | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing me with alternative, more appropriate proprioceptive activities on a regular basis – trampoline; deep pressure massage, weighted therapy. • Giving me functional tasks - fetching and carrying heavy objects such as boxes or taking the rubbish or recycling out. This engages me in gross motor activities which provide me with proprioceptive feedback • Timetabling short periods of high stimulus activity in between periods of "quiet time" or sedentary activities |

How can knowing this information help?

- Reduce stress
- Regulate mood
- Reduce behaviors caused by stress
- Improve interactions
- Increase and improve engagement
- Improve quality of life



What can you do this summer (or anytime)

- Determine if your child has a hyper or hypo reaction to each sensory system
- Create activities outside that your child likes but does not dysregulate them
- Use special interests to get them engaged
- Be creative (this doesn't have to cost a lot)





BRING A CUTE CADDY TO YOUR NEXT BARBECUE.



DIY OUTDOOR LOUNGE

Two  Step



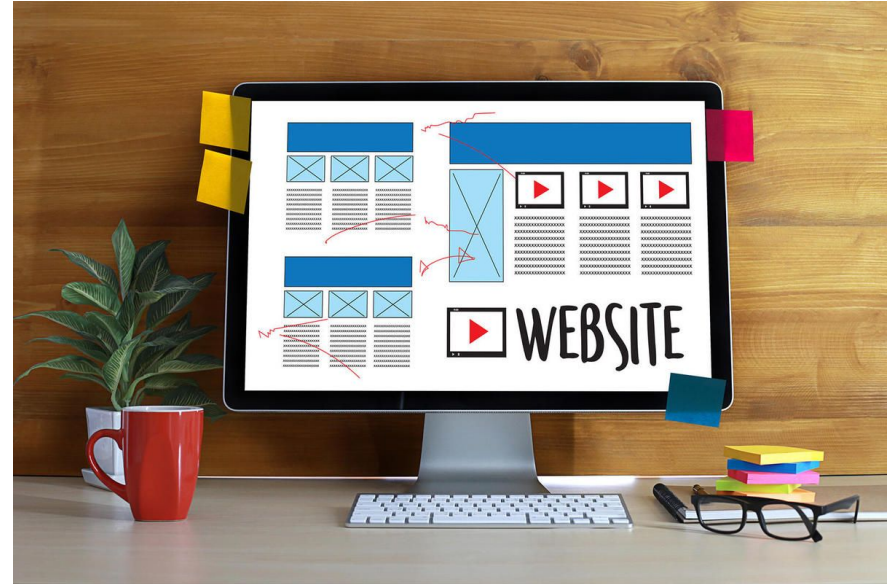
KIDDIE POOL + BLANKETS & PILLOWS



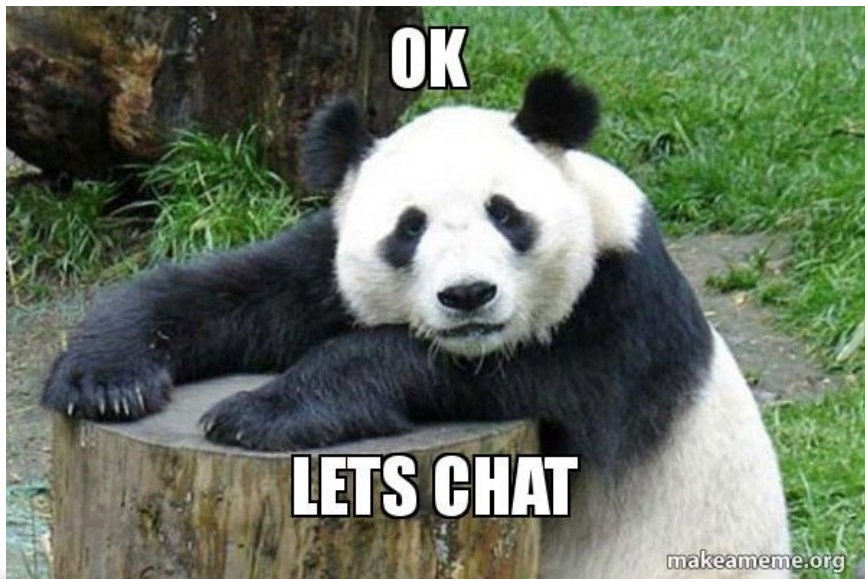
The image shows a yellow kiddie pool on a lawn, filled with colorful blankets and pillows. A small table with a drink is placed inside the pool. The text "DIY OUTDOOR LOUNGE" is at the top, "Two  Step" is in a banner below it, and "KIDDIE POOL + BLANKETS & PILLOWS" is at the bottom. A small inset image shows a close-up of the pool and pillows.

Helpful Websites for Sensory Activities and Equipment

- www.sensorygoods.com
- www.acheivementproducts.com
- www.autismproducts.com
- www.flaghouse.com
- www.affordabletherapysolutions.com
- www.specialneedstoys.com
- www.funandfunction.com
- www.southpaw.com
- www.therapro.com



LiveChat



Upcoming Topics

| Date | Topic | Presenter |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| July 16th, 2020 12:00 -1:00 | Lunch and Learn: A three-part series addressing autism and early childhood (Part 1) | Alicia Hart and Stephanie Paul |

Registration Link:

https://vcu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJltcOmprDMvG9XuFNlwo6nrTeOPJz_TPOzq

Or, go to the www.vcuautismcenter.org and click on Lunch and Learn

For questions or more information

Please visit:

www.vcuautismcenter.org

Or

e-mail: autismcenter@vcu.edu